

In The Specification

Please cancel the previous amendment on [0021] in the previous response filed Oct. 18, 2002, and therefore [0021] remain the same as the original specification as follows:

NE [0021] The mechanical support structure 112 includes a plurality of serially connected support metallic layers 102a, 102b and 102c, each located at a different height level between the bonding pad layer 116 and the substrate 100. The support metallic layers 102a, 102b, 102c are linked together via plugs 108a and 108b. The support metallic layer 102c and the bonding pad layer 116 are linked together via plugs 108c. The support metallic layer 102a and the substrate 100 are in contact with each other to form the mechanical support structure 112 between the bonding pad layer 116 and the substrate 100. The support metallic layers can be local metallic interconnects, for example.

In The claims

Please amend claims 1 and 8 as follows:

- U 1. (Thrice Amended) A bonding pad structure, comprising:
- a substrate having at least a device section and a non-device section;
 - a bonding pad layer above the substrate;